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THE BRITISH COLONIST

Thursday Morning, March 8, 1866.

To Advertisers & the Public

THE DAILY BRITISH COLONIST published every morning (Sundays excepted), is the largest and most widely circulated journal in Her Majesty's Possessions on the Continent. Subscribers may have the same left at their residence at 25 cents per week, by forwarding their address at the Office of Publication. **THE WEEKLY BRITISH COLONIST**, published every Tuesday, will be mailed or left at the residence of Subscribers, ready for mailing, at 10 cents per week, payable to the carrier.

JOB PRINTING. THE BRITISH COLONIST PUBLISHING COMPANY have received a large addition to their stock of new and beautiful printing type, which will enable them to execute with neatness and dispatch, at a slight advance on San Francisco prices.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES. In future all notices of Births, Deaths, and Marriages intended for insertion in this paper must be prepaid at the following rates: For Births and Marriages, \$1.00; for Deaths, \$1.00, with funeral notice \$1.50.

THE FINAL DEBATE.

The most important debate which has yet taken place in the House of Assembly will come on to-day. The union question will, we hope, be finally settled so far as the Lower House can settle it. Let therefore every member who values the interests of the country be at his post. When we say the debate will be a most important one, we do not mean that we are to have any very long or very original speeches, or that anything like an animated war of words will take place between the hon. members, but rather that the decision of the House may affect for good or ill the future prosperity of not only Vancouver Island but of British Columbia. It is not now a question, thanks to the union resolutions of the Assembly, of whether we shall have union, or whether we shall not; for the matter has, beyond cavil, received the sanction of the Imperial Government; but it is whether we are to have a system of Government unsuited to our condition, and restrictions imposed that may be the source of endless heartburnings in the future. We do not believe Her Majesty's Government, and more especially the House of Commons, would willingly do an injustice to the people of any of the colonies. On the contrary, the policy of Great Britain has of late years been one of the utmost liberality and consideration, evincing a disposition rather to allow the colonies to shift for themselves than to tie them down to Imperial predilections: that every colonial settlement must support itself. This of course implies but one thing, and that is self-government; for it would be simply monstrous to ask a people to assume all the responsibilities of supporting a government without giving them at the same time a full control of their own finances. It is therefore with no dread that the Imperial authorities will give us a constitution that will take away from us any of the powers or privileges which we possess that we call upon both colonies to lay their views before Mr. Cardwell; but simply that the Home Government may have the benefit of the opinions of those most interested in the proposed change, and so shape the constitution for the united colonies in a way that will meet with general acceptance.

The early days of British Columbia made it probably necessary that the lawmaking as well as the Executive power should be concentrated in the hands of a single person, but the general tenor of all the despatches of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton to the Governor was to inaugurate representative Government as quickly as possible. Migratory as the people were even as late as 1863, it was thought advisable by the late Duke of Newcastle to grant them at least a modicum of representative Government. The plan has had over a two years' test, and has shown that the people are much better qualified to make the laws than the officials nominated by the Crown. Even Governor Seymour himself, before leaving the colony, expressed a willingness to see not only a larger representative element in the Council but a portion of the ministerial power vested in the popular members. Independent of all this British Columbia is becoming more and more a settled colony. The vested interests in the country never were so great as they are to-day. The claims, therefore, of the neighboring colony, even if who were to continue isolated, to self-government could not for a moment be disputed; how much less when she becomes a member of a more settled colony that has been in the possession of representative institutions for years. But, as we have said before, there is no fear of any retrogressive step—a few addle-headed persons may scribble and rave about the dream of being turned into a Crown colony, but they belong to that harmless prophetic class who believe the world will come to an end in 1867. The only danger is the one we have previously pointed out, and that is the probability of receiving an impracticable constitution like the one we have got, or a system of Government that will allow too large an official element in the representative body. By the former system the inhabitants of Vancouver Island have seen the legislative work of two years scattered to the winds through the obstructiveness of the Upper House; and the latter scheme would scarcely mend matters. To prevent the possibility of either of these modes of Government being imposed on the united colony is the duty of every person who has the welfare of Vancouver Island and British Columbia at heart. It is this duty which should urge the members of the Assembly to day to take such action as will bring the voice of both colonies to bear on the Home Government. The House of Assembly while acting for itself in the first instance prudently refused to clog the union petition to Her Majesty with any constitutional stipulations. Then the great idea was to get the Imperial authorities to approach the subject as speedily as possible, and the resolutions have had the desired effect. Her Majesty's Government have decided on uniting the colonies. Our position is now an advanced one; we have no longer to fight the question of union; we have no longer to battle against New Westminster. On the contrary we have to fight with her to obtain the best possible form of Government. What was our policy while standing isolated, is not our policy when the neighboring colony is willing to co-operate with us. It is the interest of British Columbia as well as of Vancouver Island to have a Government, in its general system as well as in its details, suited to the country, and we hope the House to-day will do its utmost to facilitate the concentration of the opinions of the people of both colonies on this important subject.

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ALEXANDER WATSON, Treasurer.

Treasury, 9th March, 1866.

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WHEREAS, SOME PERSONS IN IGNORANCE, and others with the design of improperly gaining money out of me, are in the habit of giving credit to, and putting temptation in the way of one Mr. M. S.—, I hereby caution the public not to trust him on my account, without my written guarantee; as, in consequence of a stab cut in the head, he is never quite sound, and when under the influence of drink, to which he is liable, utterly demented, and unaccountable for what he says or does.

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